

**BOROUGH OF WESTWOOD  
PLANNING BOARD MINUTES  
PUBLIC MEETING AGENDA  
WORKSESSION/REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING  
MAY 12, 2011**

**APPROVED 5/26/11**

**1. OPENING OF THE MEETING**

The meeting was called to order at approximately 8:00 p.m.

Open Public Meetings Law Statement:

This meeting, which conforms with the Open Public Meetings Law, Chapter 231, Public Laws of 1975, is a Worksession/Regular Meeting of the Planning Board.

Notices have been filed with our local official newspapers and posted on the municipal bulletin board.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**3. SWEARING IN OF MEMBERS:**

**4. ROLL CALL:**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Birkner (arrived at 8:10 pm)  
Thomas Constantine  
William Martin  
Councilwoman Cynthia Waneck  
Richard Bonsignore  
Philip Cerruti  
Daniel Olivier  
James Schluter, Vice-Chairman  
Jaymee Hodges, Chairman  
Ann Costello (Alt. #1)  
Keith Doell (Alt. #2)

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Thomas Randall, Esq., Board Attorney  
By Steven Paul, Esq.  
Ed Snieckus, Burgis Associates, Board Planner  
Louis Raimondi, Brooker Engineering,  
Board Engineer

**ABSENT:** None

**5. MINUTES:** The Minutes of **4/14/11 & 4/28/11** were carried to the next meeting.

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6. **CORRESPONDENCE:** None

7. **RESOLUTIONS:**

1. **Greentree Developers, LLC - 10 & 20 Kinderkamack Road-Site Plan and Variance Application, Block 1608, Lots 15 & 16 - Rainbow Academy Child Care Center** - Not ready/carried to next meeting;

8. **VOUCHERS:** A motion to approve Vouchers totaling \$2,317.50 and the Purchase Order of \$4,000.00, which was for the Burgis Associates Master Plan Re-examination, was made by Mr. Bonsignore, seconded by Mr. Martin and carried unanimously on roll call vote.

9. **VARIANCES, SUBDIVISIONS AND/OR SITE PLANS: NONE**  
SWEARING IN OF BOARD PROFESSIONALS FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS  
The Board Professionals were sworn in

10. **DISCUSSIONS:**

1. **Analysis of Master Plan Discussion by Ed Snieckus - Review of the Zone Districts and Objectives Discussion of 4/7/11 Memo of Ed Snieckus RE: CBD/SPE, CBD, CO and O District Analysis** - Mr. Snieckus gave an outline of his report, offering excerpts from the 2005 Master Plan Re-Examination Report as follows:

(a) John J. Lamb Esq., representing the Westwood Taxpayers Alliance, made a brief statement and set forth the objectives, as outlined in the report that was submitted to the Mayor and Council and Planning Board at the meeting of 4/14/11. It is essentially a group of taxpayers expressing their views in some of the zones. Basically on 6/9 and 6/23/11 the Hospital Zone will be discussed, and they plan to have representatives of the hospital present. The number one goal is the number one issue in Westwood, and that is the hospital. It is important for them to focus on the importance of the hospital to the residents and the CBD and SPE Zones. (Mayor Birkner arrived at approximately 8:10 p.m.) They feel the Planning Board should review the mixed uses and what they want on the second floor in the SPE Zone. Having apartments on the second floor will promote usage of the Borough's restaurants and businesses in the evening, thus avoiding a "ghost town" effect. Further, Mr. Lamb continued, there should be a minimum seating requirement for restaurants.

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As for the demarcation line between these zones, The Board should look carefully at the issue where some properties lie in both zones. There is also inconsistency in allowing drive-throughs. A general comment in their report was for the Board to reinforce some earlier implementations and enactments. They would have Peter Steck, their planner, appear at one of the meetings. As they receive Board drafts of recommendations, they would provide comments. This would not be for all the zones.

Mr. Lamb called for questions. Mr. Snieckus commented they did not prepare a response to this particular report yet, but they were anticipating hearing from the Alliance that evening as to any other points not included in their report. As for usage on the second floor, in the CBD Zone, were they suggesting residential, he inquired. Mr. Lamb responded there were individual properties, such as Valley Ford, that should be reviewed for redevelopment for different uses. Mr. Snieckus touched on comments regarding restaurant seating and properties in dual zones. If it has frontage on a side street it could be CBD only. Mr. Lamb commented some uses may not fall in the SPE Zone but should, and likewise for the CBD. Mr. Snieckus advised he would have to review this suggestion and study the ordinances with respect to same. Councilwoman Waneck asked Mr. Snieckus if he studied the definitions of restaurants and specialty food stores, based on seating requirements. Mr. Snieckus stated he did and commented briefly.

Mr. Lamb commented they did not want too many eating establishments with only 16 seats taking over. Mr. Snieckus suggested they not remove the specialty food use, but add further clarification. Councilwoman Waneck asked if the proposal on the second floor to buffer up the residential. Mr. Lamb said it was not that specific, but they suggested more mixed use in the zone. Mr. Constantine asked for the people present in the audience who were on the alliance. Mr. Lamb stated their names were contained in the report and gave him a copy. Not everyone was present. Mr. Constantine wanted to commend them for what they did in the town. The seven property owners in town introduced themselves.

Mr. Hodges advised the Board would continue to review the matters this evening and would keep them apprised, especially as to the Hospital Zone. Mayor Birkner offered to provide any posters for the hospital to their businesses.

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Bruce Meisel came forward and suggested keeping track of who is moving in by their profiles. Many that moved to the Jefferson Avenue apartments wanted to be able to walk to the downtown, and when the move out it is usually to purchase a home. He likes to use apartments to accommodate these types. Mr. Meisel further commented air-tight definitions should be formulated for fast foods and drive-throughs. The idea also, he continued, is to absorb some of the vacancies by taking those properties and developing them. Neon signs should also be covered and prohibited, as it makes the wrong statement. Hoping on the 9<sup>th</sup>, they would have a number of alliance members present at that meeting. This will be the most important endeavor for the Borough and will enhance the livable aspects, tax rates and desirability in Westwood.

Mr. Snieckus questioned Mr. Meisel about underground garages as mentioned in the report. Mr. Meisel said they are clean, no one is hanging out there, and there is no evidence of people inhabiting the garages at night--and there are many eyes downtown. They have had an incredible, positive experience. Larry Bucciarelli found that the Jefferson Avenue building they built also lends itself to the quality of the tenants. It is monitored by television in the building and garage. The residential tenants feel very comfortable. They like being under ground when there is snow or rain. Mr. Snieckus asked about the hospital meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup>, and asked if the hospital representatives would be coming with any recommendations. Mr. Meisel suggested they call Mr. Snieckus in terms of their needs and ideas. Mr. Lamb would be meeting with them in advance of the hearing. They feel Westwood is a reliable partner in what they want to do. The Board should ask the hospital what type of ancillary uses they are thinking about and suggesting. Mr. Hodges asked Mr. Meisel and Mr. Lamb to enlighten the representatives as to the Board's plans for that meeting. This discussion was concluded.

**(b)** As for the next discussion, Mr. Snieckus continued his report as to Goals and Objectives from the last meeting and called for questions. Councilwoman Waneck suggested having available the numbers and pros and cons on the rentals from five years, i.e., homeowners vs. renters. Mr. Snieckus would update the Board as to the 2010 census and called the Board's attention to the census numbers on owner and renters. A brief discussion ensued. Mr. Martin commented we need to find the right balance

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between what we have and what we want to encourage. Mr. Bonsignore asked if we wanted to encourage underground parking, and Mr. Snieckus commented, from what we heard tonight, he sees it as having minimal impact, as long as it did not affect height limitations. Mr. Bonsignore was concerned about how it would affect a developer's application. Mr. Snieckus responded what we speak to in the Master Plan is goals and objectives and policy statements, and we could put in we recognize it and recommend it for development in the future. It should only be limited to the CBD Zone.

Mr. Martin asked if they were talking about additional buffering on Irvington Street, the area to the North of the CBD. When this zone was created in the 1930's, it was intended to extend to Irvington. Mr. Snieckus commented they had specific buffer requirements in the zone, and the Board discussed additional buffering. Mr. Snieckus would come back with changes to the appendix for review and further recommendations for number of seats and definitions as discussed.

Mr. Martin commented the Zoning Board is looking for suggestions from the Planning Board on the number of seats. Some adjustment needs to be made—limit the number of seats and tighten up the definitions as mentioned. An alternative to consider would be provided. Councilwoman Waneck discussed the colors permitted on signs. Mr. Martin discussed neon signs and suggested defining what the ordinance says. The Board did not want neon signs. Two colors were suggested, not counting black. There were no further questions on the CBD/SPE.

Mr. Snieckus briefly discussed the Cemetery Zone, including letter of the Westwood Cemetery Company, by Richard Heck, Director. There were no further questions, comments or discussions.

**11. ADJOURNMENT** - On motions, made seconded and carried, the meeting was adjourned at approx. 10:25 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,**

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**MARY R. VERDUCCI, Paralegal**  
**Planning Board Secretary**